

VZCZCXRO5449

OO RUEHBC RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDE RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHKUK RUEHLH RUEHPW  
RUEHROV  
DE RUEHJA #0063/01 0131018  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 131018Z JAN 09  
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1219  
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS COLL PRIORITY  
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0095  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 0246  
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0213  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1009  
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5834  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 3517  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1569  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2596  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 5330  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2956  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 3424  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 3236  
RUEHBD/AMCONSUL PERTH 1412  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000063

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MLS, EAP/MTS, EAP/RSP, NEA, NEA/ELA,  
NEA/IPA  
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/13/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ID](#) [SY](#) [XF](#)

SUBJECT: GAZA DOMINATES AGENDA AS SYRIAN PM VISITS INDONESIA

REF: A. JAKARTA - EAP/MTS 01/12/2009 E-MAIL

[1](#)B. JAKARTA 40 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: The situation in Gaza dominated Syrian Prime Minister Otri's January 12 visit to Jakarta. Both sides criticized Israel and called for a new UN Security Council resolution. The GOI has also broached the idea of an emergency UNGA meeting to address the situation. Indonesian President Yudhoyono also recently spoke to President Sarkozy about Gaza. The GOI is under insistent public pressure to remain engaged re Gaza and--as a country with peripheral interests in the situation at hand--is doing its best to seem busy. END SUMMARY.

SYRIAN PM'S VISIT

[1](#)2. (U) The situation in Gaza dominated the agenda during Syrian PM Mohammad Naji Otri's brief visit to Jakarta on January 12. In a joint press availability following his meeting with Otri, President Yudhoyono (SBY) underscored Indonesia's concern over the situation and asserted that Israel was not complying with UNSCR 1860. He said Indonesia wanted the UN Security Council to pass a stronger resolution. (Note: Indonesia completed its term on the UNSC at the end of 2008.)

[1](#)3. (U) Should the Council not act, Yudhoyono promised to push for an emergency meeting of the UN General Assembly to address the situation. In separate remarks re the Syrian visit, Presidential Spokesman Dino Djajal echoed Yudhoyono's comments and asserted that the United States should play more of an active role. Djajal was quoted as stating: "Maybe we can depend more on the new U.S. government that is scheduled to be inaugurated on January 20."

[1](#)4. (SBU) For his part, Otri said he agreed with Yudhoyono re the need for a new resolution. In a decidedly less moderate

vein than his Indonesian host, however, Otri went on to state: "Israel has never complied with past UN resolutions urging it to withdraw its troops from Palestinian territory. It's clear Israel is a terrorist country that always violates all aspects of international law." Otri added: "Hopefully, this case can be resolved wisely with policies to immediately end the strikes. Those who want to help this occur should immediately encourage Israel to stop its strikes." (Note: One GOI contact told us that the Syrian PM's visit had been planned for some time and was not a direct response to the Gaza situation. While Gaza dominated their agenda, Yudhoyono and Otri announced other bilateral initiatives. The two leaders issued a statement that pledged to increase cooperation on trade and investment, agriculture and energy. They also formed a joint commission to resolve the status of the approximately 7,000 undocumented Indonesian workers in Syria.)

#### WORKING OTHER GAZA ANGLES

15. (SBU) Yudhoyono remains personally engaged re Gaza. On January 10, he discussed the matter in a telephone conversation with French President Nicholas Sarkozy. In that call, Yudhoyono underscored Indonesia's support for French-Egyptian efforts to mediate the conflict. In the meantime, FM Wirajuda and Indonesian Military (TNI) Chief General Djoko Santoso both said Indonesia would contribute to a force to monitor a cease-fire in Gaza if the UN authorized such an action.

16. (C) Senior Indonesian officials again rejected the

JAKARTA 00000063 002 OF 002

exhortations of radical groups--a tiny but vocal presence here--for "volunteer fighters" to go to Gaza. Vice President Kalla and Hidayat Nur Wahid, Chair of the People's Consultative Assembly (the upper house of the Indonesian legislature) and a leader of the Islamic-oriented Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), both spoke out against the idea. They said Indonesians should show their concern for Gaza by donating to humanitarian relief efforts there. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) announced that it would prevent Indonesians from traveling to the region in order to fight in the Middle East.

17. (U) Indonesia continued its efforts to provide humanitarian aid to Gaza. Officials of the Indonesian Red Crescent Society said they had handed medical and other humanitarian supplies to Egyptian relief workers for transfer to Gaza.

#### THE GOI AND THE INDONESIAN STREET

18. (SBU) The situation in Gaza--particularly reports of Palestinian civilian casualties--is causing frustration in Indonesia, especially among its large Muslim population. As reported, there have been numerous large rallies in Jakarta and elsewhere.

19. (C) Indonesian leaders have struck a generally pragmatic tone and have reiterated their support for the Quartet's peacemaking efforts. Nevertheless, GOI officials are under insistent public pressure to be seen as engaged on the Gaza issue. This is especially true of Yudhoyono who has at times put himself forward as a bridge-builder between the West and the Muslim world. Elections also come up later this year. In light of the public pressure, the GOI--as seen in the Syrian PM's visit and its other activities--is doing its level best to seem busy, although in fact it only has peripheral interests in the situation at hand.

HEFFERN